ACTS 6:1-7 AND THE IGBO QUESTION

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Abstract

Since Nigeria's independence in 1960, several measures have been adopted to ensure that her citizens live together in unity, but none has yielded much positive results. The country is still characterised by inter-ethnic disharmony, marginalisation, etc. Surprisingly, of all the three major ethnic groups in Nigeria, the Igbo are the major victim of marginalisation. This marginalisation reached its climax shortly after the Nigerian civil war in 1970 when the Igbo were crippled economically with the ridiculous 20 pounds given to each of them regardless of how much of Biafran currency they brought for exchange. Up till today, the Igbo have constantly been humiliated and marginalised in the only country they can rightfully call their own. This has intrigued many to question the place of the Igbo in Nigeria. This paper traces the origin of the Igbo people and examines their current state in the affairs of Nigeria. The findings of the study came from the optic of Acts 6:1-7 which suggests that the issue of marginalisation of the Igbo in Nigeria can effectively be managed through restructuring of the country's political structure as rightly done by the Apostles in the early church when the Hellenistic Jews were marginalised by the dominant Hebraic Jews in the daily distribution. This paper, in its study of the pericope, adopted the critical historical exegetical method and offered some recommendations based on the findings on its study of Acts 6:1-7 that will help in addressing the problem of marginalisation of the Igbo in Nigeria.

Keywords: Acts 6:1-7, Hellenistic/Hebraic Jews, Igbo people, Restructuring, Nigeria, Marginalisation.

Introduction

Acts 6:1-7 marks the first intra-group conflict in the Christian community. In this passage, two different groups (Hebraic Jews and Hellenistic Jews) were trying to live together as one Christian community in spite of their cultural differences. This cultural divide marginalised the Hellenistic Jews. Commenting on this, Witherington (1998) avers that a community that regarded itself as the fulfilment of Israel's covenant with God, members who are more prototypically Israelite are receiving more of the group's resources than the others. This marginalised group, however, aptly complained to the Apostles and their complaint led to the restructuring of the community that would better serve the community's needs.

In the world today, most inter/intra ethnic conflicts occur as a result of marginalisation of certain group(s). The word 'marginalise' according to Okaneme (2014) means 'to treat someone or something as if they are not important.' It entails putting people in a position in which they lack power and cannot influence a decision. According to Mullaly (2007:252) 'marginalisation has the potential to result in severe material deprivation, and in its most extreme form can exterminate groups.'People who are marginalised often have little or no control over their lives, and the resources available to them. In line with this assertion, Young (2000) opines that marginalised individuals are materially deprived and as well excluded from services, programmes and policies of the society. This according to Saksena (2014) cripples the affected in making any positive contribution to the growth of the society. From the biblical creation story, we are made to understand that God created everyone equally for co-existence. However, in most culture of the world, especially the Jews and the Africans, the notion of equal co-existence is a mere daydreaming phenomenon, (Ugwu & Okoli, 2012). The Jews according to Ituma (2016) believed that God is their monopoly; hence non-[illegible] have no place in the divine economy.

In Nigeria, it is glaring that some ethnic groups claim dominance over others and this poses a serious challenge to the country's unity. No wonder Osudibia (2001) while commenting on this ugly situation postulates that marginalisation remains the major obstacle on our way to nationhood. Nigeria as a multi-lingual entity is made up of ethnic or tribal groups with a population that ranges between five thousand to five million for each group, (Uzuegbunam, 2013). The Hausa, the Igbo and the Yoruba are the three main ethnic groups in Nigeria. Others are the Tiv, the Efik, the Urhobo, the Kanuri and so on. According to Okaneme (2014), the Igbo are the third largest ethnic nationality in Nigeria after Hausa and Yoruba. He (Okaneme) observes that there is no other ethnic nationality in the country that has suffered tremendous and orchestrated marginalisation like the Igbo people. In concordance with the above Nwankwo (2000) avers marginalisation has become the Igbo's bedmate. From the optic of Okaneme (2014), the pogrom of 1966 meted against the Igbo in the northern part of the country, following their quest to secede from Nigeria, a move that was necessitated by endless acts of wickedness and man's inhumanity to man, claimed up to one million lives. It is not unsurprising that even up till today no successive governments have successfully addressed the issue of marginalisation of the Igbo. Probably that is the reason why most scholars, commentators and opinion leaders in the Eastern region of the country who do not understand why the Igbo are so neglected in a system that claims to accommodate them, questions the place of Igbo in Nigeria. Thus this gave birth to the Igbo question: *Who are the Igbo? And are they really part of Nigeria?* If the Igbo are truly part of Nigeria, then the recent call for the restructuring of the country's federal structure should urgently be addressed. Okonkwo (2018) while stressing the need for restructuring of the country's present structure succinctly defines restructuring as 'altering the way something is structured in order to make it more functional or effective.' In the context of this paper, the above definition implies that restructuring entail reworking or reorganizing the political structure of Nigeria in a way that will be generally acceptable by its citizenry, the Igbo inclusive. Understood from the above background, this research pegs its fulcrum within the pericope of Acts 6:1-7 which upholds to a reasonable extent restructuring as the best solution to the problem of marginalisation. Hence, if Nigerian leaders can restructure the country's political structure, then the complaint of marginalisation and constant secession threats by some ethnic groups in the country, particularly the Igbo will undoubtedly die off.

The Exegesis of Acts 6:1-7

2.1 Translation of the Text

Greek	English (WEB)
Acts 6:1Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις πληθυνόντων τῶν μαθητῶν ἐγένετο γογγυσμὸς τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν πρὸς τοὺς Ἑβραίους, ὅτι παρεθεωροῦντο ἐν τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ αἱ χῆραι αὐτῶν	Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, a complaint arose from the Hellenistsagainst the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily service.
Acts 6:2προσκαλεσάμενοι δὲ οἱ δώδεκα τὸ πλῆθος τῶν μαθητῶν εἶπαν Οὐκ ἀρεστόν ἐστιν ἡμᾶς καταλείψαντας τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ διακονεῖν τραπέζαις.	The twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not appropriate for us to forsake the word of God and serve tables.
Acts 6:3ἐπισκέψασθε δέ, ἀδελφοί, ἄνδρας ἐξ ὑμῶν μαρτυρουμένους ἑπτὰ πλήρεις Πνεύματος καὶ σοφίας, οὓς καταστήσομεν ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης·	Therefore select from among you, brothers, seven men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business.
Acts 6:4ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ προσευχῇ καὶ τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου προσκαρτερήσομεν.	But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.
Acts 6:5καὶ ἤρεσεν ὁ λόγος ἐνώπιον παντὸς τοῦ πλήθους, καὶ ἐξελέξαντο Στέφανον, ἄνδρα πλήρη	These words pleased the whole multitude. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the

καὶ Νικόλαον προσήλυτον Ἀντιοχέα,	Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch;
Acts 6:6οὓς ἔστησαν ἐνώπιον τῶν ἀποστόλων, καὶ προσευξάμενοι ἐπέθηκαν αὐτοῖς τὰς χεῖρας.	whom they set before the apostles. When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.
Acts 6:7Καὶ ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ ηὔξανεν, καὶ ἐπληθύνετο ὁ ἀριθμὸς τῶν μαθητῶν ἐν Ἰερουσαλὴμ σφόδρα, πολύς τε ὄχλος τῶν ἱερέων ὑπήκουον τῇ πίστει.	The word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly. A great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.

The Historical Content of Acts 6:1-7

The Historical Context of Acts 6:1-7

The authorship of the book of Acts like many other books in the bible has severally been questioned by biblical scholars; however, nobody has sufficiently provided an alternative. Although the book of Acts never mentioned its writer, from the earliest times Luke has been held to be its writer, (Barclays, 2009). The researcher agrees with this position on the authorship of Luke since there are no sufficient grounds for an opposing view. With a careful study of the Book of Acts, one would discover that it is rich in the history of the nascent church. Bruce (1962:15) sagely remarks: 'of all the Evangelists, it is Luke who approaches most nearly the standards of the classical historians.' As we all know, historians barely restrict themselves to a single document, hence, there is no iota of doubt that Luke must have presented excellent information in the Luke-Acts narratives.

However, carefully looking at our text of study (Acts 6: 1-7), one would observe that it marks the first cross-cultural conflict among the early church,(Kim, 2009). The church began to encounter some problems as it began to increase. Ituma (2003:121) meticulously avers that 'by effective biblical analysis one would expect the rate of numerical growth to indicate the rate of spiritual growth. But unfortunately, there are early indications that call for questions.'Commenting on the issue that led to the appointment of seven deacons, Ituma (2003) argues that the problem was not merely a matter of food and drink rather it is an exhumation of an age long acrimony and antagonism. This probably suggests that they have been disharmony between the Hebrews and the Hellenists prior to their coming together as one community of believers. The Hebrews here, were the Aramaic- speaking Jews who grew up in Palestine while the Hellenists refer to the Greek-speaking Jews who lived outside of Palestine but then moved to Jerusalem at some point in their adult lives (Pratt, 2017). Ituma (2003:122) observes that "for those Jews of the diaspora who have been highly influenced by the Greek culture, therefore, Hellenised, total commitment to Torah and the Tradition of the Elders is wanting. So, even though these believers were justified and regenerated it was still difficult for them to dwell together as a family. For Boice (1997: 112) it was "a problem of administration" as a result of rapid growth of the Church. Barrett (1994, 303) on the other hand narrowed it to "a minor deficiency in administration." On this note, the issue of marginalisation of the Hellenists by the Hebrews in the daily distribution can, therefore, be said to be as a result of the unbalanced structure that was in place in the early church. That is why Ituma (2003) on realising why an issue as mean as the meal could generate such a threat to unity, unsurprisingly stated that the meal issue was only the last straw that broke the camel's back. It was until after the apostles restructured the unbalanced structure that marginalised the Hellenistic Jews that the institution experienced growth and development: "the word of God increased and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem exceedingly…" (Acts 6:7).

Textual analysis of Acts 6: 1-7

v. 1-2 The growth of the church and the beginning of complaints by the Hellenists

Ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἡμέραις ταύταις:En dé taís hȩmérais taútais (Now during those days)according to Bruce, (1967), marksthe beginning of a new division in the early church. πληθυνόντων *(*plēthynontōn*)* used in this versewhich is a genitive form of the verbplhqoj *(plēthos)*meaning 'to increase' is used the show the rapid growth of the early church, (Vincent's Word Studies, 2006). The word 'μαθητῶν' (mathētōn) which is earlier used for the personal followers of Jesus before his Ascension, is used in Acts as a name for Christians in general, (Bruce, 1967).This according to UBS (1997) is the first time in the book of Acts where the term 'disciples'is used as a designation of the Christians. Altogether the corresponding Greek term is used more than twenty-five times in Acts; once with the addition "of the Lord" (Acts 9:1); and in 9:25 the reference may be limited to the followers of Paul, Saul's followers,(UBS, 1997). 'παρεθεωροῦντο' (paretheōrounto) which means 'being neglected'is the imperfect passive of the verb 'paretheōrou' meaning 'to overlook' or 'to neglect'(Vincent's Word Studies, 2006).

v. 2-5 The Need to Restructure The Church Organisation

The Apostles, upon seeing the need to restructure the church organisation, asked the disciples to look among themselves and choose seven men 'μαρτυρουμένους; *marturoumenous*(of good report). *'marturoumenous'*is the present passive participle of '*martureō*' meaning 'to bear witness to'(Vincent's Word Studies, 2006).The motive behind the Apostles' directive is that they'*may appoint'* them to oversee the material needs of the church. '*may appoint'* in Greek καταστήσομεν: 'katastēsomen'is future active indicative of katastēsomi', *"we shall appoint", as* an action of the apostles following the choice by the church. It is promised as a certainty, not as a possibility, (Robertson 2006). The apostles believe that restructuring the church organisation will enable them concentrate on τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦλόγου:: *tē diakonia tou logou'*(the in ministry of the words). According to Robertson (2006) '*diakonia'* (ministry) is the same word employed in Acts 6:1, but here it's about preaching as the special ministry with which the apostles were concerned.

V. 5-7 Restructuring Through the Appointment of Deacons

When the community of believers received the proposal presented to them by the Apostles they were 'ἤρεσεν::ēresen *(pleased).* 'ēresen*'* is the Aorist active indicative of *'areskō'* (Robertson 2006). So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch, (Acts 6:5 WEB). 'Chose' in Greek is 'ἐξελέξαντο'*; exelexanto* which is the first aorist middle indicative of *eklegō*, meaning "to pick out from." (Theological Dictionary of New Testament,1978). Each one of the seven has a Greek name, however, according to Vincent Word Studies, (2006), there is no reason to infer from this that they were all Hellenists because it was customary among the Jews to have two names, the one Hebrew and the other Greek. They were probably partly Hebrews and partly Hellenists. They were then presented to the Apostles who in turn inaugurated them. The result of this restructuring as seen in verse 7 is remarkable. The number of the word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied.

Conclusion of the Exegesis

The exegesis and the textual analysis of Acts 6:1-7 reveals that two different groups (Hebraic Jews and Hellenistic Jews) were trying to live together as one Christian community in spite of their cultural differences. This cultural divide which favours the Hebrew-speaking

Jews marginalised the Hellenistic Jews.This brought a very serious problem to the unity and growth of the early church. However, the Hellenist complained to the Apostles about the unbalanced structure that marginalised them the community that claimed to accommodate them. For the Apostles, who were unbiased and selfless, listened to the voice of the Hellenist and in response, proffered a lasting solution by restructuring the structure of the early church to accommodate the interest and wellbeing of the marginalised. The consequence of this was remarkable: 'the word of God spread so rapidly and the number of the disciples overwhelmingly multiplied' (Acts 6:7).

Hermeneutics of Acts 6:1-7 In The Nigerian Context

Origin of the Igbo People

To properly understand the Igbo question in Nigeria, it is quite necessary to trace the history of the Igbo people as Fafunwa in Ikeanyibe (2006:39) rightly opine that ''history is to a people what memory is to the individual. A people with no knowledge of their past would suffer from collective amnesia, groping blindly into the future without guide...". Ilo (2008) also points that 'people who are not self-conscious and who cannot define where they stand culturally, from a human point of view, cannot really and concretely take control of their fate and future in the historical process. However, in a paper of this nature, it will be extremely difficult if not impossible to give a perfect account of the origin of Igbo people. There are several intriguing theories or rather histories that have been propounded to ascertain the origin of Igbo people, but still, some scholars believe that the question of the origin of Igbo people has not been fully answered. For instance, there is a popular school of thought that linked the origin of the Igbo people to the Jewish state of Israel. Also, there is another one which claimed that the Igbo people might have migrated from Egypt during the Stone Age era. (Onwubiko, 2017).

The uncontrollable desire to have a glimpse of Igbo past had made several scholars and ethnographers propound many hypothesis and myths to explain the origin of the Igbo people, oftentimes with references to the role of Nri in the making of Igbo history. On this note, Ikeanyibe (2006) infers that Nri is believed to be to Igbo what Ile-Ife is to Yoruba people. Some scholars such as Sabinus Iweadighi and so on, on the other hand, believe that the origin of the Igbo people is still unknown. Iweadighi (2011) avers that ' just as the term Igbo is unknown, so also is the origin or descent of Igbo people not yet known with certainty. Nonetheless, the school of thought that held the view of Jewish origin have over the years seems to have been widely accepted by scholars. For Andrews and Gates, (2000), the Igbo originated from the Jews. In the same vein, Ikeanyibe, (2006:14) observes that 'as early as 1978, the view that the Igbo originated from Israel was not only held but had actually been published and documented in London.' Stating further, Ikeanyibe avers that Olaudah Equiano an Igbo ex-slave was not only the first documented Igbo historian and ethnographer but also the first to ask and answer the question, 'what is the origin of Igbo?'(Ikeanyibe, 2006).

Equaino (1999) in his autobiography titled '*The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa*' went on to proffer an answer to the question of Igbo by inferring that Ndi Igbo are among the lost tribe of Israel. To buttress this, Equaino enumerated several cultural and religious elements familiar to both the Igbo and the Jews.No wonder Ikedife in (Ikeanyibe, 2006:15) proudly declares: 'the feeling in our blood suggests that we actually originated from Israel'.In alignment with this, Chukwuneke & Okoye in Ikeanyibe (2006) pointed out, perhaps based on Equiano's proposition, several elements in Igbo and Jewish culture and religion which suggest common ancestral descent. For Chukwuneke & Okoye, both the Igbo and the Jews have a common belief in the existence of a Supreme Being known as 'Chukwu' and 'Yahweh'. The word 'Abia' or 'Abiah,' an Igbo term, probably the identity of the present Abia state is a Jewish name given to the second son of Samuel.

...home (known as Ikunne in Igbo). Compare Okonkwo's exile in Achebe's ... with Genesis 28, (Chukwuneke & Okoye in Ikeanyibe 2006), With the ... researcher cannot but to align himself with the proposition of Israel's *origin of*

The Igbo People in Nigeria Today

The Igbo people, *according to Basden (1966), occupy a very considerable area in the Eastern part of Nigeria.* They are bordered on the East by the Ibibio. *the Ijaw on the* Southwest *and the people of Idoma in the direction of Northern Nigeria (Ikeanyibe, 2006).* *Many scholars have criticized the internal configuration of Nigerian federal structure because* of its perceived neglect of some section of the country. For Skinner, (1963) it is a bane to Nigeria's unity, national consciousness and socio-political integration. Ome, (2013) avers that it poses a serious challenge for sustainable national integration, while Okaneme (2014) hits the hammer on the nail's head by stressing that of all the ethnic nationality in Nigeria, it is only the Igbo that have suffered tremendous and orchestrated marginalisation. This position was aptly collaborated by Amanambu (2017) who enumerated the progroms against the Igbo people to include Jos 1945, massacre, Kano 1953 and 1966 pogrom and 1967-1970 Igbo genocide. It was after the civil war that the *marginalisation reached its highest boiling point.* This extreme act of wickedness started with ordinary twenty pounds given to them irrespective of how much Biafran currency they brought for exchange to confiscating their property under the guise of being termed as 'abandoned property.' This according to Okaneme (2014) was merely to cripple them economically. Ever since then up till today, the Igbo story in Nigeria has been an unpleasant one.

This is so because of the how the country is maliciously structured to the detriment of the Igbo people.

Out of 774 local Governments in Nigeria for instance, the Northerners alone have the whopping sum of 411 local governments, Southwest 137, South-South 125, but in the East, their case is different. The whole of Igboland has just 95 Local Governments, (Okonkwo,2018). This is utterly a ploy to destabilize the Igbo economically. Okonkwo (2018) in his bewilderment, wonders why it is only 12 unity colleges that were built in the Southeast despite high secondary school enrolment figures in that region, while the North of Nigeria has 57 unity schools, Southwest 18 and South-South, 17. In the area of infrastructural development, it is crystal clear that there's no significant federal presence in Igboland as they have the worst road network in the country (Okaneme 2014), and as well lacks functional international airport, (Amanambu, 2017). The only Federal presence in Southeast is the increasingly militarization of Igboland in a bid to taunt and attack members of MASSOB (Movement for the Actualization of Sovereign State of Biafra) and IPOB (Independent People Of Biafra) with their so-called "Operation Python Dance" despite the non-violent nature of these movements, while states such as Kaduna and Benue where thousands of people have been roasted by the rampaging Fulani herdsmen and sharia agitators have not received such militarized exercises (Amanambu, 2017). More so, of all the geopolitical zones in Nigeria, it is only the Igbo that have the least number of states (Okaneme, 2014). Another instance that depicts the condition of the Igbo people in Nigeria today is the nature and way of federal appointment. Abdulrahman (2015) for instance, enumerated the first and second batches of appointments the current administration in Nigeria made where Igbo people were ridiculously excluded without any justifiable proof to show their ineligibility. Commenting on this ugly scenario, Amanambu (2017) avers that 'inasmuch as the state of origin should not matter where productivity is prioritized, however, in heterogeneous society like Nigeria where

national appointments are considered the rights to enjoying "national cake", sidelining any section in key appointment is often a subject of unhealthy misinterpretations'. In fact, the pain of this situation in the Southeast had made the researcher join several others to wonder why this sort of wicked structure exists. Why is the marginalisation of the Igbo in Nigeria still more pronounced? When will Nigeria be restructured?

Some high-profile Nigerians have on many occasions mocked the Igbo whenever they complain or call for restructuring. For instance, the present Governor of Kaduna state, Nasir El-Rufai who chaired the APC committee had in an interview described the Nigerians (the Igbo undoubtedly) who are clamouring for restructuring as "political opportunists and irresponsible people" (Nwaneri, 2018). Similarly, the present governor of Borno State, Mr Kashim Shettima in an interview is quoted to have said 'to hell with restructuring', while the current Minister of Information and Culture, Alhaji Lai Muhammed has made us understand that restructuring is not a priority of President Buhari administration (Ogundipe 2018). All these remarks probably depict the age-long hatred some tribes who are in the helm of affair in the country have for the Igbo people. And consequently, this had hindered the country from moving forward economically and otherwise; as growth and development thrive where peace and tranquillity abound.

Implication of Acts 6:1-7 to the Igbo Question

The attitude of the apostles in Acts 6:1-7 towards restructuring the unbalanced structure that was in place in the early church is worth emulating. It is an undeniable fact that in every inter-cultural entity, marginalisation of at least one group or section is always natural and inevitable; however, the main problem usually arises if the issue of marginalisation is poorly addressed or not addressed at all. As shown in the exegesis of Acts 6:1-7, the Hellenist complained and expressed their ordeal as a result of the unbalanced structure that marginalised them in the commonwealth of a community that claimed to accommodate them. The Apostles, who were unbiased and selfless, listened to the voice of the Hellenist and in response, proffered a lasting solution by restructuring the structure of the early church to accommodate the interest and wellbeing of the marginalised. The consequence of this was remarkable: 'the word of God spread so rapidly and the number of the disciples overwhelmingly multiplied' (Acts 6:7).

Though the case of the marginalisation in Acts 6:1-7 was in a biblical context, and the marginalisation of the Igbo is in Nigerian context, there is however a dominant issue common to both contexts, and that is the issue of marginalisation. The Igbo people in Nigeria today are seriously complaining and expressing their grievances on the kind of brutal marginalisation meted against them as a result of the country's present political structure. This has hindered unity and progress and no doubt fuelled the fire of constant secession threats in the country.

Since restructuring was the strategy the apostles smartly employed to successfully resolve the issue of marginalisation in the early Christian community, therefore, if Nigerian leaders should do the same and see that the country is thoroughly restructured, then unity, peace and progress will undoubtedly become a permanent feature in all parts of Nigeria. A corollary of a restructured Nigeria therefore entails granting each region of the country autonomy. This will make the people concentrate more on what is happening in their states and hold their Governors and State lawmakers accountable to them than they currently hold the Federal Government. If the Igbo, for instance, are granted autonomy, they will develop their state and create numerous jobs for her people. This will make all the States in the Igbo region less dependent on meagre allocation from the Federal Government and equally important, the constant secession threats and agitation from the region will automatically die down. However, if Nigeria fails to be restructured living in peace as one entity [illegible] them.

Recommendation

This paper gives the following recommendations:

1. Since restructuring was a huge factor that the leaders of the early church used to put down the fire of marginalisation in Acts 6:1-7, it is recommended that Nigerian leaders should use restructuring to address the increasing problems facing the country today such as secession threats and so on.
2. All the regions of the country should have an equal number of states and local governments. The current economic disadvantages experienced by the Igbo in allocation distribution should be brought to an end. The Igbo should have an equal share in the national 'cake' with their counterparts. This will boost job creation, growth and development in the region.
3. The major reason why there's an increasing demand by the Igbo for secession from Nigeria is that the region is largely underdeveloped due to overdependence on the federal government. Hence, this paper recommends that the Igbo region should be given more autonomy to operate and control the internally generated revenues in the region.

Conclusion

This paper was a focus on Acts 6:1—7 and the Igbo question in Nigeria. It is found out in the course of exegesis of the pericope of Acts 6:1-7 that the problem of marginalisation can rightly be solved through restructuring. Hence, it is demanded that for any heterogeneous society to live together in peace and unity, there must be proper restructuring to accommodate everyone's interest. In contrast to the above, it is pointed out in this paper that current structure in operation in Nigeria poses a serious challenge to her unity and development. It is observed that Igbo people have been thoroughly marginalised in the only country they can rightly call their own. Little wonder the fact that secession and independence state of Biafra have constantly on the lips of most Igbo people. On the basis of the above, the implication of restructuring in Acts 6:1-7 cannot be overlooked. The restructuring of the early church by the Apostles in Acts 6:1-7 challenges Nigerian leaders to do the needful to ensure that the country is restructured.

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